
MP: AZERBAIJAN HAS TO RECONSIDER ITS COE MEMBERSHIP

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APAs interview with Chingiz Ganizade, member of the Azerbaijani Parliament

Q: What do you think of the current level of relations between Azerbaijan and the Council of Europe (CoE)?

A: Azerbaijan has always strived to comply with its commitments and is still doing so. Even the president has stressed in his speeches that Azerbaijan is a place of moral politics. This also has to do with the attitude towards the Council of Europe. However, from time to time, we see the opposite of what we expect from the Council of Europe, because some foreign MPs are always trying to put pressure on Azerbaijan by creating a faction in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and sometimes they succeed. When they see a small form of what happens in other countries, even in their own countries, they try to use it as a form of political pressure.

Q: CoE representatives have been criticizing Azerbaijan lately. What do you think of it?

A: The Council of Europe tries to exert pressure on Azerbaijan, and even Secretary-General Jagland is making certain statements. I think that these pressures are due to the independent policy and development of Azerbaijan and the policy of Azerbaijani President İlham Aliyev in line with the national and state interests of Azerbaijan. Independent, fair internal and foreign policy being pursued by President İlham Aliyev based on the national interests of the Azerbaijani people is irritating some western circles, including the Council of Europe. The policy of President İlham Aliyev towards resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and restoring the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is not accepted by certain powers. Sometimes they try to find some unpleasant things in order to have the Azerbaijani president back off from his position, in a bid to put political pressure on Azerbaijan. Behind these pressures is Azerbaijan's growing economic, political and military strength and independence. In other words, not always are big states happy with small states making independent decisions and carrying out independent policies. Only big powers want these states to be their vassals so that they can make decisions on behalf of them. Armenia is an example of this. Today, decisions on Armenia are taken by other states. In other words, the independent policy of Azerbaijan, the internal and foreign policy of the Azerbaijani president based on national, state interests, Azerbaijan's growing economic, political and military power disturbs the forces that do not favor us, and they try to find various excuses and make decisions against our country as a form of pressure against.

Q: How do you feel about CoE Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland's statement that some decisions of the European Court of Human Rights concerning Azerbaijan have not been fulfilled?

A: It is unacceptable of the secretary general of an organization like the Council of Europe to make such a statement about a member state of the organization in relation to a very ridiculous issue. There are 10,000 unfulfilled decisions of the European Court of Human Rights in respect of CoE

member states. The Council of Europe, including Thorbjørn Jagland, ignores it and even tries to have these decisions fulfilled by other means. However, they do not make proposals for the expulsion of the member states where these decisions are not executed. The CoE Secretary-Generals proposal to expulse Azerbaijan from the Council of Europe is based on neither sympathy for that person nor Jaglands respect and value for the human rights. There are a bigger policy and bigger interests behind it.

I have always been of the opinion that Azerbaijan should not leave Europe. The policy of the Azerbaijani president is that we give preference to European values and as a European country we stand ready to cooperate with international European organizations. However, each cooperation and partnership should be bilateral. That is, each party has to tell inform another of their defects very skillfully and cautiously. Saying it in statement or ultimatums is not of cooperation and partnership. If Thorbjørn Jaglands proposal appears on the agenda of the upcoming PACE session, Azerbaijan will have to reconsider its relations with the Council of Europe and its membership.

Kaynak/Source: